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Remembering Recorded Events

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Remembering Recorded Events Completed Summary

K. Korcsog, 2020

The ability to remember has been described as one of the most important cognitive functions, largely because it is evolutionarily optimal to be able to retain information relevant to survival. Autobiographical memory, which is defined as one's memory for their own experiences, is especially paramount as it contributes to self-identity and the ability to learn from past experiences. The current study investigated the brain activation associated with different types of social feedback on autobiographical memory through the use of Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS). Seventeen undergraduate participants were presented with video- and audio-recorded scenes of an actress performing everyday tasks. One week later, they were given either confirmatory or disconfirmatory social feedback regarding the accuracy and occurrence of their memories whilst their left prefrontal cortical brain activity was recorded using fNIRS. It was found that on average, participants' brain activity differed dependent upon whether the feedback was about scene details or scene occurrence, and upon whether the feedback was confirmatory or disconfirmatory. It was also found that participants who maintained, relinquished, or partially relinquished their belief in their memory had distinct patterns of cortical activity within the left prefrontal cortex. This study was the first to use a functional neuroimaging paradigm to investigate the dissociation between one's appraisals of belief in accuracy and occurrence, demonstrating that they are neurologically distinct metamemorial appraisals. Thus, these findings reinforce the uniqueness of decision-making about memory in general, highlighting the continued need for research investigating the appraisals contributing to memory reports.